REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 31-48 are now pending in the application, with Claims 31, 36, 41 and 46-48 being independent. Claims 31, 36 and 41 have been amended and Claims 46-48 are newly-presented herein.

In the Office Action dated August 23, 2005, Claims 31-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,657,741 (Barry et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Each of independent Claims 31, 36 and 41 recites, inter alia, discriminating whether a document comprising a plurality of pages is to be printed as a plurality of copies or as a single copy, and generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document copy by copy such that the page order in each copy is maintained if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a plurality of copies, and generating print data for causing the plurality of printers to print the document page by page if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a single copy.

Each of independent Claims 46-48 recites, inter alia, discriminating whether a document comprising a plurality of pages is to printed as a plurality of copies or as a single copy, and controlling the plurality of printers to print the document copy by copy such that the page order in each copy is maintained if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a plurality of copies, and controlling the plurality of printers to print the document page by page if discriminated that the document is to printed as a single copy.

As discussed previously, Barry et al. relates to a multiple print engine system that can allow a plurality of work stations to create individual print jobs and then transfer them to a distributing processor. If the number of copies is greater than or equal to the number of print engines, then print data is distributed to four engines with three engines printing N and the fourth engine printing the rest. As understood by Applicant, if four jobs of 50 copies are executed with two printers, the first two jobs are sent to the first printer and the second two jobs to the second printer. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Barry et al. that the page order in each copy will be maintained. Accordingly, Barry et al. fails to disclose or suggest at least generating print data for causing a plurality of printers to print, or controlling the plurality of printers to print, the document copy by copy such that the page order in each copy is maintained if discriminated that the document is to be printed as a plurality of copies, as is recited in each of the independent claims.

Accordingly, Barry et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 31, 36, 41 and 46-48.

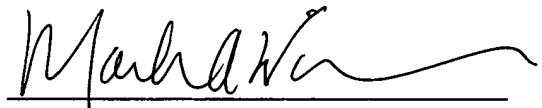
Therefore, independent Claims 31, 36, 41 and 46-48 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 31, 36, 41 and 46-48. Dependent Claims 32-35, 37-40 and 42-45 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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